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lacked." Through the championship of early prophets, priests, and kings, delivering Israel from foreign foes and the Canaanites still residing in the land, Yahweh became himself the Baal or the Lord of the land. His worship was then purified from the evil elements which it absorbed, by the contest, in the first instance, with the Syrian Baal who stood in with court luxury and oppression, while Yahweh represented the cause of simple life. Then in the humiliation of Northern Israel, and at the same time the recognition of the almightiness of Yahweh, came the conception of the purpose of Israel's choice and the demand of Yahweh for righteousness expressed by the prophets of the eighth century. This is the line of thought of the first four lectures. In the last two (there are six altogether), discussing the religion of Yahweh in Judah, a striking point is given in the notion that Manasseh's idolatry was not meant to be hostile or irreverent toward Yahweh, but that the sun, moon, and stars were worshiped in the temple as Yahweh's vassals, and thereby the conviction of Yahweh's supremacy over the whole world and all its gods was sharpened by this pantheon subordinated to him.

All such endeavors, as represented in these lectures, to trace the historic growth of Israel's religion are praiseworthy and lead forward to its true solution, but they always involve such a one-sided selection of material for proof, and such preconceived views of biblical statements, that one is tempted again and again to say "*non liquet*;" yet they *may* be in the line of exact truth.

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EDWARD L. CURTIS.

The Son of Man: Studies in His Life and Teachings. By GROSS ALEXANDER, S.T.D., Professor of New Testament Exegesis in Vanderbilt University. Nashville, Tenn.: Barbee & Smith, 1899. Pp. xvi + 380. \$1.

Rev. J. J. Tigert, D.D., book editor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who writes the introduction to this volume, speaks of it as "the first contribution to biblical theology emanating from our ministry or church, and a most noteworthy contribution." The southern Methodists are to be congratulated, and it is sincerely to be wished that they may accept this valuation of the book by the official editor of their publications. It would be a profitable thing for the great mass of church members, north as well as south, to read a work like this, which is popular in its presentation of the facts, brief and sketchy;

yet scholarly and modern in its spirit and standpoint. The style also is readable and clear.

Every year brings forth a number of books on the life and teaching of Jesus, mainly of a popularizing rather than of a scientific character. Professor Alexander's volume deserves a good place in the popular class. It is not a systematic treatment, either of the life or of the teaching of Jesus. The topics in the life which he presents are: the Conditions and the Beginnings, the Supernatural Birth, the Baptism, the Equipment of Jesus, the Test in the Desert, the Transfiguration, the Resurrection. The topics in the teaching are: the Kingdom of God, Conditions of Entering the Kingdom, the King, the Law, and the Kingdom, Jesus' Doctrine of God the Father, the Daily Prayer of God's Child, Jesus and the Old Testament, the Self-Consciousness of Jesus.

The book is, therefore, much more complete for the teaching than for the life of Jesus, as the author touches upon but one point between the temptation and the resurrection. And the main interest is with the teaching, which makes the book valuable, because we have many popular writings upon the events of Jesus' ministry, but few upon the great revealing message which he brought to the world.

Professor Alexander has wisely followed the best recent New Testament scholars, for he states that he is "especially and deeply indebted" to Keim, Weiss, Wendt, Bruce, and Schürer, and the references throughout the pages show a close acquaintance with the writings of many others of the foremost scholars. The extensive quotations from many of these works, sometimes whole pages, and in the text itself rather than in footnotes, perhaps add to the value of the book, but detract much from its originality.

One need not enter here into a detailed criticism of the author's views upon the many problems which confront him in his work. For the most part the great events of Jesus' life, and the great themes of his teaching, are presented with excellent scholarship, discrimination, and spiritual insight. That one might differ with him at many points of his interpretation only indicates that the problems concerning Jesus are still far from solution. But Professor Alexander proceeds according to the scientific principles of historical investigation, and is admirably—though not wholly—free from dogmatic and traditional preconceptions and limitations. One of the greatest religious needs of the present hour is for men—Christians no less than others—to get face to face with the historical Jesus as he appears in the gospels,

with the interpretations and accretions of the centuries removed. Every book which assists men to this primary knowledge of Jesus is peculiarly valuable, and the present volume is of that kind.

C. W. V.

The Covenant of Salt, as based on the Significance and Symbolism of Salt in Primitive Thought. By HENRY CLAY TRUMBULL, D.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899. Pp. 184. \$1.50.

The study of customs and modes of thought is as important as a critical study of the words themselves. Dr. Trumbull writes with surprising freshness upon an old subject, largely because he has acquainted himself with actual usages, as well as with words. The latter, in common speech and use, lose much of their vividness and even meaning by being separated in space, time, and mind from the thing originally described. Having revived our appreciation of covenants, of blood and of the threshold, he now tells of salt as the seal of union between God and man. This most common of all substances, which the spectroscope shows to be almost omnipresent, stands to the oriental mind as the representative of life, even as blood does. Salt vivifies vegetable matter, enriching it with a soul like that belonging to animal meat. In the case of flesh it preserves what is, for the eater at least, its life. Those peoples who do not put salt on their meat, drink, eat, or preserve the blood of the animal slain. The practical identity of salt and blood, as both representative of life, is shown by Dr. Trumbull with marvelously rich illustration out of the vast stores of his reading. He has set forth attractively what the Scriptures, the custom of living men, and the traditions and folk-lore of many nations have to tell of the covenant of salt. Who that has upset the salt cellar has not been obliged, under social coercion or with merriment, to throw some of the spilled salt in the fire, "lest there be a quarrel"? We have seen this custom in places as far apart as Fukui and Philadelphia. Under a household habit lies a truth profoundly discerned and still vital to the oriental. Dr. Trumbull's pithy chapters could be easily enlarged from the habits of life in the countries bordering on the Pacific, where fixed rules about the buying and use of salt and the undesirability of spilling it are in vogue.

Although the word "covenant" appears more than two hundred and fifty times in the Old Testament, there are but three places where "the covenant of salt" is spoken of (Numb. 18:19; 2 Chron. 13:5;